

## Young People's Societies

### MISSIONARY RESPONSIBILITY.

Topic for Sunday, December 26: Our Responsibility for Home and Foreign Missions. Matthew 28:16-20.

#### DAILY READINGS.

Monday: A missionary Kingdom. Nehemiah 9:20-23.  
Tuesday: The Church A Good Samaritan. Luke 10:25-37.  
Wednesday: Missionary commands. Psalm 119:2-8.  
Thursday: A serious task. Ezekiel 3:16-21.  
Friday: No shirking. Jonah 1:1-3; 3:14.  
Saturday: The imperative, Go! 1 Corinthians 9:16; Matthew 9:35-38.

It is well to close the year with an emphasis upon our personal responsibility.

God has given us a wonderful honor, in calling us to be co-workers with himself.

He will ask us to give account of the trust placed in our hands. Have we buried the talent?

He graciously offers all the aid we need in meeting the responsibility laid upon us. "As thy day, so shall thy strength be."

Christ's last words on earth were, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel unto every creature." Are we obeying the command?

He himself gave example of what he would have us do. Samaria, Phoenicia, Decapolis and Perea, no less than Judea heard from his lips the gospel of the kingdom.

The foreigners who came to the Jews' own doors heard his gracious message, as the centurion at Capernaum, the woman of Canaan, the Greeks at Jerusalem.

Home missions and foreign missions are one. Whether in the one or the other the messenger is carrying the same story of the same Saviour to the same needs of the soul.

The Old Testament, Jewish and Mosiac as was its dispensation, recognized the call of God to all men. Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba were of heathen lines, but they were put in the line of the Prince of Peace.

A whole book is devoted to a missionary expedition to a heathen city. It is that of Jonah. Nineveh witnessed the greatest metropolitan revival known in history—Jonah recoiled from the mission and repined at its result, but God carried it on.

The early church took long to learn the lesson of missions, and God had to scatter it to accomplish the work. But when it grasped the idea of missions it quickly found itself, and from that day began to take possession of the world. Jonah's and Peter's Joppa has an illustrious history.

"The field is the world, and the reapers are the angels." An angel is a messenger. Would you be one? "The fields are white to the harvest." "Go and reap and bring in the sheaves, for the grain is ripe and ready to be garnered now. You shall doubtless return rejoicing, bringing your sheaves with you."

No effort in seeking to tell the story of the cross, at home or abroad, will be in vain. "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

St. Augustine was wont to wish three things: First, that he might have seen Christ in the flesh; second, that he might have heard Paul preach, and third, that he might have seen Rome in its glory. We have not seen Jesus Christ in the flesh—and never can, nor can we look upon Rome in its glory, but if we have the faith of humble, persistent Christian believers we may yet hear Paul preach, and we may enter some day a city far more glorious than that which Nero rebuilt on the famous Seven Hills.

## Prayer Meeting

### THE VICTORIES OF CHRIST.

Week Beginning Dec. 19. Luke 4:16-22.

Jesus did not begin his ministry in Nazareth. He doubtless regarded the difficulties that would be encountered in appealing to those who were familiar with his youth and his life as a citizen. He accordingly, after his baptism and the temptation in the wilderness, went into other parts of Galilee "in the power of the Spirit." Such was the effect of his ministry there that "a fame went out concerning him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues being glorified of all."

He then felt justified in going to those who had known him before his ministry began. Our lesson describes his visit to his former neighbors and the discourse which he delivered and the extraordinary impression that it at first made.

We are told that on coming to "Nazareth where he had been brought up, he entered, as his custom was, into the synagogue on the Sabbath day." The meaning seems to be that he came to Nazareth at this particular time because "he had been brought up" there, and he entered into the synagogue in keeping with his uniform custom while that had been his home. Attendance at the synagogue had no doubt been a means of his intellectual and religious education. Probably the beautiful passage which he here quotes from Isaiah became familiar to him in the worship upon which he regularly attended. Children were admitted to public worship at an early age and were required to attend after reaching the age of thirteen. There is a lesson at this point that parents and children may well learn. Attendance on the place appointed for worship is not to be neglected nor lightly esteemed. The example of our Master here is of unmistakable import.

Either of his own volitions, or because requested to do so, "he stood up to read"; and there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. Reading and expounding the Scriptures were of first importance in worship. To this our Lord addressed his attention at this time. He opened the book (or "unrolled the roll," for this was the form in which books were made) and found the prophecy about himself which he declares to be fulfilled in his own person. This prophecy sets before us "The Victories of Christ."

The first words declare our Lord's anointing by the Holy Spirit which was symbolized at the time of his baptism. To him the Spirit was given without measure. The mystery to us, of the enduement of the second person of the Trinity by the third, must remain, but the solemn and sublime reality is none the less impressive. To the work of the world's redemption the divine Redeemer was consecrated by the Spirit.

To understand the import of this passage which is expressed in metrical form, we must bear in mind the significance of the year of jubilee. In the civil as well as the religious life of the Jewish people there was a year of grace which might very reasonably be construed as a type of the Messianic era. This was the year of jubilee, which returned every fifty years. (See Lev. xxvi). It was God's provision for a periodical social restoration in Israel. The man who had sold himself into bondage might in this year regain his liberty. Those families from which their patrimony had been alienated had their possessions restored. Amnesty was granted to persons imprisoned for debt. These all were true types of the work of him who was to give liberty to the enslaved spirits of men, to enrich them with an enduring substance and pay the full price of their redemption. What an appropriate passage this is for inaugurating our Lord's ministry amidst the scenes of his hitherto lowly life.

On the first day of the year of jubilee, the priests went throughout the land and with sounding trumpets announced the blessings that the year would bring—"the acceptable year of the Lord." It is this ceremony or service which is probably referred to in the words, "He hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor." As applied to our Lord it undoubtedly signifies that his mission was to provide and